The Bachelorette: 
An Honor Council Academic Trial 
Released Fall 2020

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Key:
Confronted Party: Hannah B.
Confronting Party: Professor Rachel Lindsay
Chair of the Haverford Finding Love Department: Professor Chris Harrison
Chair of the Bryn Mawr Finding Love Department: Professor JoJo Fletcher

Summary/Pre-Trial:
This case involved plagiarism on an annotated bibliography assignment in which Hannah B. included text from an outside source without proper citation. During the trial, Hannah B. plagiarized on another assignment for the same class. Honor Council decided it would be best to consider this new violation as part of the original trial rather than send it to a separate trial. Due to the severity of the second violation and its proximity to the first, this trial resulted in Hannah B. failing the course with special stipulations which would allow her to still graduate on time. Due to extenuating circumstances, this trial was run with 9 jurors rather than the usual 10.

Fact Finding I:
The jury met with Hannah B. and Professor Rachel Lindsay to hear their perspectives on what had happened. Hannah B. shared that she had not intentionally plagiarized. She said she thought she might have copied text from a few websites into her document, but that she had intended to rephrase them before submitting her assignment. However, she ran out of time due to health issues and didn’t check whether she had actually done so. She said she had not realized this when she submitted the assignment, but she agreed with Professor Rachel Lindsay that she had plagiarized.

Professor Rachel Lindsay gave an overview of the assignment and pointed out several instances of plagiarism in Hannah B.’s submission. Upon seeing Hannah B.’s assignment, Professor Rachel Lindsay noted that it was much shorter than those of other students and was missing some of the information it was supposed to contain. To investigate, she looked up one of the
article’s Hannah B. had cited and found that her summary was copied directly from the website. She also pointed out that some of the articles Hannah B. had used unauthorized sources instead of the peer-reviewed journals required for the assignment. Hannah B. knew that her articles were not from the proper sources, but she wanted to submit something and felt that they were better than nothing.

Hannah B. then stepped out so the jury could speak with Professor Rachel Lindsay alone. The plagiarized assignment had been the first assignment in the class, and Hannah B. had submitted two additional assignments since then. Professor Rachel Lindsay said that Hannah B.’s second assignment had shared the same issue of using articles from non-academic sources. As such, she had required that Hannah B. receive approval of her article choices for the third assignment. Both the second and third assignments had also been longer and more in-depth than the first. Professor Rachel Lindsay noted that Hannah B. said she copied and pasted text from the articles into her first assignment, but the text on her first assignment contained typos not present in the source material. She also expressed frustration that Hannah B. still plagiarized despite the fact that a great emphasis had been placed on avoiding plagiarism at the beginning of the semester. Furthermore, Hannah B.’s story had changed since their initial meeting about the violation. She initially thought that she may have memorized the phrasing from her sources and then inadvertently used that phrasing in her assignment, but she later said she had copied the text over and forgot to edit it.

Professor Rachel Lindsay then left, and Hannah B. stepped back in so the jury could talk to her a second time alone. Hannah B. said she felt that her personal relationship with Professor Rachel Lindsay was still good and that Professor Rachel Lindsay was not holding anything against her. She maintained that her plagiarism had resulted from her poor time management and not from a misunderstanding of proper citation guidelines or of the assignment. Going into more detail about her writing process, Hannah B. said that she had skimmed and copied over key phrases while reading the articles. She said she initially thought she might have accidentally memorized the wording used in the articles but realized that was not the case when she looked back.

**Jury Deliberations:**
Several jurors shared Professor Rachel Lindsay’s concern about Hannah B.’s story changing between the initial confrontation and the Fact Finding meeting. Jurors were also troubled by the slight modifications made to the original text (such as minor typos and restructuring of sentences) because it seemed to indicate that the plagiarism was not accidental. Ultimately, the jury felt that Hannah B.’s account could make sense if she had been copying over phrases rather than full sentences or paragraphs. This, in addition to the fact that her work was not high quality, also made sense in the context of Hannah B. rushing to finish the assignment. In either case, the jury unanimously felt that a violation of the Honor Code had occurred and consented to the
following Statement of Violation.

**Statement of Violation:**

[Hannah B.] violated the Honor Code by plagiarizing on an annotated bibliography assignment. (9 jurors consent)

**Fact Finding II:**

Two days after the jury consented to the above Statement of Violation and before the Circumstantial meeting took place, Professor Rachel Lindsay contacted the trial chair to say that she had found a new instance of plagiarism in an assignment that Hannah B. had recently submitted. This instance was even more troubling, not only because it was a repeat violation, but also because the source that was plagiarized was not cited at all. Professor Rachel Lindsay had grown suspicious of the writing style in parts of the assignment and quickly found the source material by looking up one of the distinct phrases used throughout the assignment. In light of this new development, the jury decided to have a second Fact Finding meeting to hear from Hannah B. and Professor Rachel Lindsay about the second violation.

Hannah B. seemed taken aback by the fact that her recent assignment contained plagiarism. She thought that she had included quotation marks and cited the source in her references, despite this not being the case. She felt that this had again resulted from her running out of time near the deadline. In her haste to submit the assignment, she had forgotten to add quotation marks and cite the article. Several days before the due date, she had reached out to Professor Rachel Lindsay asking if she had enough sources, and Professor Rachel Lindsay had told her that while she had fewer than would usually be expected, she should just submit what she had. Despite this, Hannah B. felt that she didn’t have enough and was trying to add new sources at the last minute. The jury felt that this was an odd explanation, since it seemed that if Hannah B. was trying to add additional sources, she would have been sure to acknowledge them in the references.

Regarding her process, Hannah B. said that she had again copied and pasted text from the article into her document with the intent of editing it later. Although in the last meeting Hannah B. had felt that her relationship with Professor Rachel Lindsay was in good standing, she no longer felt the same. She felt that Professor Rachel Lindsay had become frustrated with her and the trial process, and she was worried that it might affect her grade in the future. Having discovered this additional violation, Professor Rachel Lindsay did not feel that Hannah B. should be able to pass the course, which she would have to do in order to major in Finding Love at Haverford. Professor Rachel Lindsay suggested that Hannah B. major at Bryn Mawr instead since their senior capstone project is only one semester long.

**Jury Deliberations:**
The jury was skeptical about Hannah B.’s explanation for not citing the article due to the aforementioned reason — if the purpose for adding the plagiarized portion was to increase her number of sources, why would she not add it to the list of references? The jury also felt that Hannah B. and Professor Rachel Lindsay were not on the same page. Finally, it seemed that Hannah B.’s writing process was flawed. In both cases, even if she had changed the phrasing before submitting her work, copying and pasting text from articles is not the proper method for summarizing or paraphrasing. Some jury members felt that Hannah B. was not telling the full truth and thought that her actions may not have actually been unintentional. In any case, it seemed that there was room for restoration between Hannah B. and Professor Rachel Lindsay and for education with Hannah B. about proper summary techniques. The jury consented to the following revised Statement of Violation.

**Statement of Violation II:**

[Hannah B.] initially violated the Honor Code by plagiarizing on an annotated bibliography. Two days after the Fact Finding meeting for that trial, she further violated the Honor Code by plagiarizing on a literature review for the same class. (9 jurors consent)

**Circumstantial:**

Hannah B. began by going into more detail about her medical concerns that had played a role in her running out of time to work on her assignments for the course. During the semester, she had been on medication that resulted in her being very drowsy and thus had difficulty completing assignments in a timely manner. In the case of the second violation, she had actually been at a doctor’s appointment in the morning on the due date and was rushing to submit her work after the appointment in order to make the deadline. On other assignments for the course, she had attempted to take steps to alleviate issues regarding source materials and timeliness by checking in with Professor Rachel Lindsay about her sources before turning her assignments in.

When asked about what kind of resolutions she felt would be helpful, Hannah B. replied that she thought she would benefit from resolutions that would help her understand the expectations regarding proper citations and fill in the gaps in her knowledge. Professor Rachel Lindsay had suggested over email and in the previous meeting that Hannah B. fail the course, which would make it impossible for Hannah B. to complete the Haverford Finding Love major and graduate on time. Hannah B. was not happy with Professor Rachel Lindsay’s proposal that she major at Bryn Mawr instead since she had taken most of her classes at Haverford and would have to form new relationships with the professors there. She also thought that separation from the Haverford community would be difficult since there were Haverford-only courses that she needed to take in order to complete her separate minor.

**Jury Deliberations I:**
In coming up with a list of potential resolutions, the jury struggled with balancing the need for accountability with a desire to ensure Hannah B. would be able graduate on time. In order to feel comfortable recommending that she fail the class, the jury wanted to know what classes she had taken to ensure that she could still graduate on time by majoring at Bryn Mawr. Furthermore, the jury was concerned about her not having a relationship with any of the professors there.

For accountability, the jury felt that merely failing the two assignments was insufficient, since it would have been better for her to have submitted nothing rather than submit plagiarized work. The jury discussed the pros and cons of three given options: recommending that she fail the course, separating her from the Haverford community, and barring her from majoring at Haverford. Ultimately, it seemed that all of these options achieved similar things, since having her fail the course would mean that she could not major at Haverford. Jury members largely felt okay with recommending that she fail the course, provided that she could still graduate on time by majoring at Bryn Mawr, since this would still allow her to complete her minor at Haverford. The trial chair reached out to Hannah B. for a list of courses she had taken so the jury could verify that she was on track to graduate at Bryn Mawr.

In terms of education, the jury felt that Hannah B.’s suggested resolution made sense. It seemed that she had some level of misunderstanding regarding proper summary/paraphrasing practices. The jury discussed meetings with both the OAR and the Writing Center. These were intended to focus on proper citation and writing techniques as well as on time management, since running out of time had been a factor in both violations.

As for restoration, the jury was concerned that a discussion between Hannah B. and Professor Rachel Lindsay would not be productive since it seemed that Professor Rachel Lindsay had grown frustrated with the process. However, there was still some tension between the two parties, which the jury wanted to resolve. The jury felt that it would be better to have Hannah B. write a letter of apology to Professor Rachel Lindsay discussing her violations of the Honor Code. However, there was concern that if this letter contained excuses it would only further Professor Rachel Lindsay’s frustration. To ensure that this didn’t happen, a jury member would read Hannah B.’s apology before the letter was sent to Professor Rachel Lindsay. The jury also briefly discussed Hannah B. writing a letter to the community or a letter to her class but decided that neither of these options was a good fit for this particular situation.

It was getting late at this point, so the jury decided to end the meeting and reconvene at a later date to consent to a set of tentative resolutions.

**Jury Deliberations II:**
Unfortunately, the jury did not hear back from Hannah B. in time for the second Deliberations
meeting. However, they decided to go forward with consenting to tentative resolutions with the understanding that they could be changed in Finalizing if the feedback and additional information from Hannah B. significantly altered the situation.

First, the jury discussed the resolutions that had been suggested to address accountability — failing the course, separation from the college, and not being allowed to major at Haverford. The jury decided to recommend that Hannah B. fail the course and major at Bryn Mawr instead, which would still allow her to complete her minor at Haverford.

Lastly, the jury discussed meetings with both the OAR and the Writing Center. In both violations, Hannah B. had been rushing to finish her assignments right before the deadline, so it seemed that it would be helpful for her to work on time management. The jury also felt that these violations stemmed from flaws in Hannah B.’s writing process — namely that she was copying text from articles directly into her assignment and then editing (or forgetting to edit) it. For this reason, the jury felt that she should work with the Writing Center to improve her process and hopefully avoid similar violations from occurring in the future. The jury was intentional about distinguishing the purposes of these two resolutions in order to avoid needlessly overburdening Hannah B.

The resolution addressing restoration had already been discussed at the previous meeting, so the jury primarily focused on the wording of the given resolution. After having this discussion, the jury consented to the following list of tentative resolutions.

**Tentative Resolutions:**

1. The jury recommends that [Hannah B.] fail the course, with the understanding that she will major at Bryn Mawr College instead. (9 jurors consent)
2. [Hannah B.] will write a letter of apology to [Professor Rachel Lindsay] reflecting on her violations of the Honor Code. A member of the jury will review this letter before it is sent to [Professor Rachel Lindsay]. [Hannah B.] will write this letter by the end of [date redacted]. (9 jurors consent)
3. [Hannah B.] will meet twice with a faculty tutor at the Writing Center to discuss the writing process and how to avoid plagiarism. The jury recommends that she continue to use this resource for future assignments. She will complete these meetings by [date redacted]. (9 jurors consent)
4. [Hannah B.] will meet twice with an academic coach from the Office of Academic Resources or the Bryn Mawr equivalent to discuss time management strategies. She will complete these meetings by [date redacted]. (9 jurors consent)

On resolutions as a whole: 9 jurors consent
Statement on Reporting:
The jury recommends that this should be reported to other institutions of higher learning. (9 jurors consent)

Finalizing Resolutions:
Between Tentative and Finalizing Resolutions, Hannah B. contacted the trial chair with feedback from her meeting with her dean and Bryn Mawr’s Finding Love department chair, Professor JoJo Fletcher. Since Hannah B. had not taken the majority of her Finding Love classes at Bryn Mawr, Professor JoJo Fletcher didn’t think that she should be allowed to major there. Professor Rachel Lindsay still strongly felt that Hannah B. should fail the first semester of her senior seminar. This was not ideal since it would mean Hannah B. would not be able to graduate on time. Professor Rachel Lindsay spoke with Professor Chris Harrison, the chair of the Haverford Finding Love department, and he suggested that Hannah B. fail the first semester of her senior seminar but still be allowed to take the following semester’s seminar, provided that she also take an additional junior seminar. This would allow her to graduate on time while still allowing Professor Rachel Lindsay to assign the failing grade she felt was necessary.

At the Finalizing meeting, the chair shared the above proposal with Hannah B.; she felt that it was a fair solution. She also felt that the other resolutions would be helpful for her. Professor Rachel Lindsay was not present for the meeting but had voiced her support of the resolutions over email. The jury consented to the following list of Finalized Resolutions, incorporating the new version of Resolution 1. They also slightly edited the Statement on Reporting to reflect some jurors being unsure of whether this should be reported or not.

Finalized Resolutions:
1. The jury recommends that [Hannah B.] fail the course with the understanding that she is permitted to take the [redacted] semester of senior seminar, provided she also takes an additional junior seminar. (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)
2. [Hannah B.] will write a letter of apology to [Professor Rachel Lindsay] reflecting on her violations of the Honor Code. A member of the jury will review this letter before it is sent to [Professor Rachel Lindsay]. [Hannah B.] will write this letter by the end of [date redacted]. (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)
3. [Hannah B.] will meet twice with a faculty tutor at the Writing Center to discuss the writing process and how to avoid plagiarism. The jury recommends that she continue to use this resource for future assignments. She will complete these meetings by [date redacted]. (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)
4. [Hannah B.] will meet twice with an academic coach from the Office of Academic Resources or the Bryn Mawr equivalent to discuss time management strategies. She will
complete these meetings by [date redacted]. (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)

On resolutions as a whole: 8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia

Statement on Reporting:
Most of the jury recommends that these incidents should be reported to other institutions of higher learning. (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside in absentia)

Post-Trial:
Trial resolutions were not appealed.

Discussion Questions:
1. Throughout the trial, some jurors expressed concern that Hannah B. and Professor Rachel Lindsay were not on the same page. Should it be a priority to make sure the confronted and confronting parties are on the page, or should jurors just allow the facts to speak for themselves?
2. If new violations occur during a trial, should they break off into trials of their own or simply be added onto the existing/ongoing trial?
3. Was the compromise between failing the course and still being able to major at Haverford while graduating on time a good decision?